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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 11 July 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Leinarte

Contents

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Initial report of the State of Palestine

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Initial report of the State of Palestine (CEDAW/C/PSE/1; CEDAW/C/PSE/Q/1 and CEDAW/C/PSE/Q/1/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the State of Palestine took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Alaga** (State of Palestine) said that her country's initial report (CEDAW/C/PSE/1), which had been drafted with the cooperation of civil society, provided an overview of the experience gained, the progress achieved and the challenges encountered by her country in its implementation of the Convention. Women's rights and the principle of gender equality had been enshrined in the 1988 Palestinian Declaration of Independence, reaffirmed by the Palestinian National Council — the legislature of the State of Palestine — and the Palestinian Central Council of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), and reflected in national policies and strategies aimed at achieving gender equality. With a history dating back thousands of years, her country had been founded on the principles of peace, friendship and coexistence and built on a system of social justice, equality and non-discrimination. The State of Palestine was a place for all Palestinians, no matter where they lived, to develop their national and cultural identity and enjoy full equality of rights. Geopolitical interests and tensions between major political powers, however, had created multiple social and legal frameworks, caused the dividing up of the Palestinian territory and led to the exile of many of its people. Despite the continued and unjust Israeli occupation, the Palestinian people had kept their dignity in the face of such encroachment of their ancient lands.

3. Article 9 of the 2003 Amended Basic Law provided for the right of all citizens to gender equality, equal opportunities and non-discrimination. A number of laws had subsequently been adopted to ensure equality in many areas of life, including in education, health and the justice system. At the current time, the Legislative Harmonization Committee was working to repeal discriminatory legislation and review public policies and services so as to align them with the Convention and other international instruments to which the State of Palestine was a party. For instance, the Committee had recently issued recommendations for the amendment of a law on cybercrime. The country's determination to protect human rights was borne out by its recent accession to, among several other international instruments, the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

4. It should be recalled, however, that Israel, the occupying Power, must fulfil its obligations under international humanitarian and international human rights law, comply with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and implement the Convention to uphold the rights of Palestinian women and girls. The Government closely monitored any violations by Israel of the rights of Palestinians and brought them to the attention of the international community. It had also filed complaints with international courts and human rights bodies and, in May 2018, had submitted evidence to prosecutors at the International Criminal Court concerning war crimes and crimes against humanity.

5. In the area of diplomacy, efforts had been made to garner support for international resolutions calling on the occupying Power to uphold its obligations under international humanitarian law and safeguard the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Most recently, in June 2018, the General Assembly had adopted a resolution on the protection of the Palestinian civilian population, in which it had deplored the use by Israel of excessive force against Palestinian civilians who had taken part in peaceful protests in East Jerusalem. Other resolutions had been issued on women's rights and on the right to health in the State of Palestine and the occupied territories, including for persons deprived of their liberty.

6. Efforts were being made to strengthen the legal framework and ensure that all international treaties to which the State of Palestine was a party were incorporated into national law. In that regard, a 2017 decision of the Supreme Constitutional Court, which

had ruled that the Convention prevailed over domestic legislation, had been adopted by the parliament. In addition, a bill on the promotion of women's rights had been prepared, the Penal Code had been amended to increase the penalties imposed for offences committed against women and girls and a technical committee had been established to review the country's personal status laws and harmonize them with the Convention.

7. In other areas, the Palestinian Central Council had adopted a decision to establish a 30 per cent quota for women's representation in the PLO decision-making bodies. Measures had also been taken to promote the Sustainable Development Goals, with working groups having been formed to focus on how the country would meet Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. The Ministry of Women's Affairs had entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Central Bureau of Statistics to improve the collection of gender-disaggregated data, with a view to combating domestic violence and bringing perpetrators of violence against women and children to justice. Other measures included the adoption of a gender strategy by the national police and public meetings aimed at transforming societal attitudes. Lastly, the Government had established a monitoring committee with responsibility for providing oversight of the measures that would be undertaken to give effect to the Committee's forthcoming recommendations.

Articles 1 and 2

8. **Ms. Ameline** said it was hoped that the Committee's first dialogue with the State party not only heralded further progress for the rights of Palestinian women and girls but also for the development of peace in the region. Although women had borne the brunt of the suffering in the State of Palestine, they also represented a major force for peace. In that connection, and noting that the Government had acceded to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, she wished to know how and to what extent women participated in investigations of cases referred to that Court.

9. According to the report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, on her mission to the Occupied Palestinian Territory/State of Palestine (A/HRC/35/30/Add.2), a new constitution was being prepared and was intended to replace the 2003 Amended Basic Law. She therefore wondered whether a constitutional committee had been set up to coordinate that work and, if so, whether it was gender balanced.

10. The Committee was of the view that the Convention was applicable to all persons under the jurisdiction or effective control of a State party and had consistently reminded Israel of its extraterritorial responsibilities. That said, violence against women in the State party was not linked solely to the occupation of Palestinian territory; political division, legal complexity and fragmentation and institutional weaknesses were among other factors contributing to women's insecurity. She would like to know what measures had been taken or were envisaged, including through the use of presidential decrees, to develop comprehensive legal frameworks and strategies to govern and promote women's rights and gender equality, repeal archaic and discriminatory laws and legal provisions, amend the various personal status laws, modernize the Penal Code and introduce legislation to combat violence against women.

11. The Committee was gravely concerned about the situation in Gaza, where the humanitarian crisis had further eroded women's rights. She asked whether the State party was working with the international community to implement the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences; whether humanitarian organizations had unfettered access to Gaza; and what had been done to protect victims of the violence, in particular refugees, displaced persons and the Bedouin population.

12. The status of the Convention in the State party's legal system required clarification. Although the Supreme Constitutional Court had ruled that the Convention prevailed over domestic legislation, certain legal exceptions had been applied, which seemed to indicate a dualist approach to the application of international law. She would therefore welcome further information on the specific measures taken and timeline envisaged for the

incorporation of the Convention into the domestic legislation so as to ensure that its provisions could be directly applied. She would also be grateful to know whether the Convention would be published in the country's Official Gazette and whether there were plans to strengthen the mandate of the committee set up to harmonize legislation, referred to in the replies to the list of issues (CEDAW/C/PSE/Q/1/Add.1, paras. 2–4), in order to facilitate a systematic review of all legislation, establish a clear legal hierarchy and expedite the adoption of pending bills.

13. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that civil society had participated in the preparation of the initial report. A standing ministerial committee had been established in 2014 to follow up on the accession of the State of Palestine to international treaties and instruments and monitor the implementation of the Convention and other instruments. The State of Palestine was currently considering acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Following a long period of political instability, the Government had managed to put in place a parliament and the Palestinian Central National Council had been given the power to make laws. A legislative harmonization committee had been set up to review and update current laws and oversee the transposition into national legislation and implementation of international conventions ratified by the State of Palestine. Furthermore, various bodies dedicated to improving women's rights had been established. The Government was working in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations to overcome political divisions, particularly in Gaza, and ensure women could exercise their rights.

14. **Ms. Abusaa** (State of Palestine) said that the legal framework of Palestine, which included sharia law, was complex and fragmented. Palestinians were subject to different personal status laws and women's rights were adversely affected. The committee for the harmonization of laws, composed of judges and magistrates from both Gaza and the West Bank, was thus reviewing the country's various laws and overlapping jurisdictions. The Government was working to foster national dialogue and ensure respect for religious pluralism in the State of Palestine. Work was also under way to ensure that all court sentences passed in Jerusalem were valid. Free legal aid was guaranteed to women through the National Legal Aid Commission.

15. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine), regarding the question raised on the hierarchy of laws, said that the Supreme Constitutional Court had given a landmark opinion regarding the status of international conventions in national law, decision No. 4 of 2017. It had ruled that such conventions must be incorporated into the law. The decision in question did not, therefore constitute in any way a reservation to any international convention. The Government was committed to implementing the international treaties it had ratified.

16. **Ms. Ameline** asked whether the Government was considering the establishment of a comprehensive and strategic national policy for gender equality and whether urgent measures had been taken for victims of the conflict and women victims of the crisis in Gaza.

17. **Ms. Schulz** said that she would like information on the legal standing of international conventions in relation to national law, including religious law, particularly in view of decision No. 4 of the Supreme Constitutional Court.

18. **Ms. Manalo** said that the provision of decision No. 4 that international conventions were superior to local legislation so long as they were consistent with the national, religious and cultural identity of the Palestinian people constituted, in effect, a reservation to article 4 of the Convention. She therefore asked how the Government would address that inconsistency.

19. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that work was being carried out to develop a comprehensive legal framework. Under the national policy agenda for the period 2017–2020, the committee set up to harmonize the laws had begun its review of draft legislation, particularly amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Penal Code and the Personal Status Code. Decision No. 4 did not constitute a reservation to the Convention, which would be published once it was incorporated into national law.

20. **Ms. Alattrash** (State of Palestine) said that various temporary measures were in place to assist women and girls affected by the conflict, such as the cash transfer programme of the Ministry of Social Development. Under that programme, over 3 million new shekels (NIS) had been distributed to 110 families, over 60 per cent of whom were in Gaza. Programmes to improve women's economic empowerment had also been established. Over the previous year, food supplies had been distributed to around 43,000 families, over 60 per cent of whom were based in Gaza. Emergency assistance was also available, and had been provided to nearly 2,000 families in 2017.

Article 3

21. **Ms. Haidar** said that Palestinian women had been peacebuilders and pillars of society in the face of the aggressive practices against them and their State. Alongside Israeli peace activists, they were working towards peace in the region. She asked what role women played as human rights defenders and in the national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and how that plan would be monitored to ensure its effective application. She asked how that national plan would address violations of women's rights in the State of Palestine. She wondered what role Palestinian women played in peace and national reconciliation processes and how the Government would address the absence of women at decision-making levels to ensure their participation in peacebuilding. Women's currently poor representation on the legislative harmonization committee should also be redressed.

22. **Ms. Gabr** said that she would like information on the coordination of the various women's rights mechanisms and the budget afforded to the Ministry of Women's Affairs to strengthen women's rights and implement the national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). She asked how the human resources and capacities of the Ministry of Women's Affairs would be strengthened. She would appreciate further information on the monitoring conducted to ensure implementation of the provisions of the Convention relating to the protection of vulnerable groups, such as older persons and persons with disabilities. She wondered how the reduction in vital humanitarian assistance to the State would be dealt with and what support the State envisaged from United Nations agencies and the international community.

23. **Ms. Elhaq** (State of Palestine) said that civil society representatives had been appointed to the Higher National Committee for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which had approved the national action plan for its implementation. Measures had been taken to implement the plan in all sectoral policies and raise awareness of it among government departments and civil society. Training workshops had been led for women to enhance their participation in decision-making and for women journalists and media professionals to inform them of their rights. Assistance was offered to vulnerable groups such as the Palestinian Bedouin population.

24. With a view to ensuring accountability of the perpetrators of crimes, mechanisms to document violations by the Israeli armed forces of the rights of Palestinian women were in place. Efforts were being made to carry out the relevant United Nations resolutions concerning Palestinian women. Measures had also been taken to improve women's political participation, which included reviews of relevant legislation and awareness-raising campaigns.

25. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that women's participation in the Palestinian reconciliation talks held in Cairo in November 2017 had been significant and had contributed to the application of the national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

26. **Ms. Hanania** (State of Palestine) said that the Palestinian Central Council had issued a decision to guarantee that women occupied at least 30 per cent of the leaderships positions in State institutions.

27. **Ms. Alaga** (State of Palestine) said that Palestinian women were indeed strong, defending their State and facing imprisonment, torture and widowhood. Women occupied certain high-level positions, such as the governor of Ramallah and some leaders of political parties. However, the fact that women accounted for just over 60 per cent of graduates was

not reflected at the leadership level. Despite limited resources, the annual budget allocated to the Ministry of Women's Affairs had reached US$ 2 million. The State of Palestine depended on donors and international development assistance.

28. **Ms. Alattrash** (State of Palestine) said that a social development strategy for the period 2017–2022 had been adopted to protect and ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups of women, including older women and women with disabilities. The Government was studying ways to reduce its dependence on international humanitarian assistance. An independent commission on economic empowerment, composed of young persons, persons with disabilities and women, among others, had been established. It had been afforded a significant budget and was charged with helping families to lift themselves out of poverty.

29. **Ms. Ameline** asked how the composition of the courts, especially in rural areas with limited access to justice, would be improved and how effective training on the Convention for judges could be ensured. The Government might consider availing itself of international assistance to develop training programmes on gender equality.

30. **Ms. Gabr** asked which bodies were responsible for disseminating and monitoring the implementation of the Convention and the Committee's concluding observations.

31. **Ms. Haidar** said that she would still like to know how women were involved in decision-making in relation to the national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). It was important that women participated in negotiations following the Cairo reconciliation talks between Palestinian factions.

32. **Ms. Manalo** asked whether tools were in place for the inspection and evaluation of the national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the monitoring mechanism related to that plan. She would like information on the sex-disaggregated data and gender-oriented budget necessary to give effect to the plan.

33. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) country office in the Occupied Palestinian Territory served as the link between the State of Palestine and the international community and was responsible for providing technical assistance to Palestinian governing institutions, with a view to enabling the State to fulfil its international treaty obligations. As part of that arrangement, training courses on human rights and international conventions, including the Convention had been offered to government officials and relevant civil society representatives.

34. **Ms. Salhieh** (State of Palestine) said that the Government remained committed to promoting women's access to justice. It had launched several initiatives aimed at raising awareness and preventing gender-based violence against women and had strengthened and harmonized legislation to combat domestic violence. Women victims had the right to justice and redress under the Penal Code.

35. **Ms. Alhabbash** (State of Palestine) said that efforts had been made to combat negative gender stereotypes and harmful cultural practices against women within the sharia court system. Some 13 sharia courts had been established to serve vulnerable and marginalized women, 2 of which were located in the West Bank. Training sessions on preventing and combating domestic violence had also been held for sharia court judges and prosecutors. Between 2014 and 2017, 14 support offices had been established to provide free legal advice and assistance to women victims of violence. New legislation to combat gender-based violence had also been drafted and awareness-raising campaigns on domestic violence had been conducted across the State.

36. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that the Government remained committed to working in close cooperation with the international community and civil society to promote women's rights. The Ministry of Women's Affairs had taken the lead role in coordinating efforts to that end.

37. **Ms. Nassar** (State of Palestine) said that the Government had drafted a bill to combat domestic violence which took into account the Committee's most recent recommendations in that area.

Article 4

38. **Ms. Acosta Vargas**, welcoming the State party's use of quotas to increase the number of women in political and decision-making positions, said that she would like to know whether the Government would adopt additional temporary special measures in order to promote women's participation in economic, social and cultural life.

39. **Ms. Salah** (State of Palestine) said that the Government had made concerted efforts to combat discrimination against women in the labour market, including through the introduction of a 5 per cent quota for women with disabilities and other concrete measures aimed at promoting women's employment.

40. **Ms. Haidar** asked whether the Government had adopted a general policy on temporary special measures aimed at combating all forms of discrimination against women.

41. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that programmes had been devised to combat discrimination and promote women's participation in political and public life. The Government had also adopted a general policy on temporary special measures aimed at combating all forms of discrimination against women.

Article 5

42. **Ms. Gabr** said that she would like to know what measures had been taken to combat negative gender stereotypes against and discriminatory cultural attitudes towards women, particularly in the education and justice sectors. Welcoming the progress made towards defining honour crimes and marital rape as offences, she wondered when the Government would harmonize legislation relating to women's rights and their protection from gender-based violence, particularly in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. She would appreciate further information regarding the training provided to judges, magistrates and lawyers and staff working in women's shelters on the provisions of the Convention in that regard. It would be particularly useful to hear what steps had been taken to implement the Committee's general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19.

43. **Ms. Nasser** (State of Palestine) said that the Ministry of Education and Higher Education had amended the national school curriculum and issued revised school textbooks at all levels of the education system with a view to countering negative gender stereotypes. Efforts had also been made to increase the number of women and girls attending vocational training courses and strengthen their representation in non-traditional fields of education. The Government remained committed to eliminating violence against women and had implemented a number of measures to implement the Committee's general recommendation No. 35.

44. **Ms. Ayyad** (State of Palestine) said that police officers and members of the judiciary attended training and awareness-raising courses on the provisions of the Convention and on combating gender-based violence against women. Civil society organizations and international partners had participated in the organization of such training and capacity-building activities. Previous training courses had included modules on interviewing techniques and psychosocial support for women victims of violence.

45. **Ms. Nassar** (State of Palestine) said that numerous measures had been taken to combat negative gender stereotypes in the media. Training on promoting gender equality and combating social, cultural and traditional attitudes that perpetuated harmful gender stereotypes had been provided to media organizations. A national media campaign to combat gender-based violence against women had also been conducted in 2017.

46. **Mr. Sharqawi** (State of Palestine) said that the Ministries of Justice and Social Development had drafted a bill to combat gender-based violence against women which had been put before the parliament. The Government had also worked closely with international partners to tackle all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls.

47. **Ms. Alattrash** (State of Palestine) said that staff working in shelters were fully qualified and had been specially trained to support women victims of domestic violence and trafficking, including women with disabilities.

48. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that further information on article 5 would be provided in writing at a later date.

Article 6

49. **Ms. Hofmeister**, noting the important role played by the President in the implementation of the Convention, asked what steps had been taken to accelerate the process of issuing presidential decrees to incorporate the Convention's provisions into national legislation. She also wished to know whether the Government intended to define child prostitution and pornography as offences and adopt measures to combat the exploitation of and trafficking in women and girls, including through the development of a comprehensive national anti-trafficking plan. Further information regarding the mandate and composition of the national team tasked with drafting anti-trafficking legislation and the steps taken to share information and best practices on combating trafficking with neighbouring countries would be welcome in that context.

50. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that the process of bringing the State of Palestine's legislation into line with the Convention was still in its early stages: shortcomings in the legislation remained. A national committee against drugs and crime was working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to put in place the measures and policies required to counter human trafficking. The State of Palestine had issued an open invitation to all United Nations special procedures mandate holders to visit the State of Palestine to allow the country to profit from their advice in the reform of the legal system. The Permanent Representative of the State of Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva had issued an invitation to the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, to visit the country to help review its legislation in the area of trafficking.

51. **Ms. Wahdan** (State of Palestine) said that the crime of human trafficking was not yet clearly defined in her country's legislation. The Government acknowledged the seriousness of the crime, which was a transnational issue. It was reviewing the legislation in the light of the Arab Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and the Arab Model Law against Human Trafficking, with support from UNODC. The legal team carrying out the review was joined by civil society partners. While there was no specific law on trafficking, work was under way to draft such legislation that would draw on the Penal Code of Jordan, No. 16 of 1960, which contained a number of articles that were applicable to trafficking. It should be recalled that the State of Palestine did not control its own borders, and human trafficking took place in areas under the control of the Israelis.

52. **Ms. Abusaa** (State of Palestine) said that the State of Palestine would require international cooperation and support in updating its legislation. Regional cooperation was required to tackle the issue of girls being sold for marriage. In 2017, there had been six cases of girls under the age of 14 years being taken across a border for the purpose of marriage. The occupying authorities should introduce measures to prevent underage Palestinian girls from being transported into another country for that purpose.

53. **Ms. Alattrash** (State of Palestine) said that her country provided many services to women victims of trafficking on condition that they agreed to enter protection centres and ceased any involvement in prostitution.

54. **Ms. Salhieh** (State of Palestine) said that the Penal Code of Jordan contained articles specific to prostitution, brothels and child pornography. The unlawful marrying of underage girls was a crime provided for under the personal status laws and the Penal Code. The legal framework covering human trafficking already existed, and the Government was working to bring it into line with the Convention.

55. **Ms. Hofmeister** said she would be grateful if the Government could provide written statistics on the number of cases of violence against women dealt with by the courts.

56. **Ms. Salhieh** (State of Palestine) said that the State of Palestine was collecting data on gender-based violence and could provide disaggregated statistics. The documentation included crimes that were committed under the Penal Code; there were cases of femicide,

sexual abuse, rape, adultery, suicide and attempted suicide. She would provide the statistics in written form at a later date.

Articles 7 and 8

57. **Ms. Acosta Vargas**, referring to the issue of women's participation in political life and to the 30 per cent quota that had been set by the Palestinian Central Council as an objective in March 2015, said that she wished to know what were the tangible steps the Government was going to take to reach the 30 per cent figure. The Committee had observed that, where such quotas were put in place and sustained, they opened up genuine possibilities for progress towards parity. In respect of the Government's 2017–2022 Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy: Promote Gender Equality and Equity, she asked what steps had been taken to promote women's access to decision-making positions in the executive. She also wished to know what proportion of the constitutional drafting committee was made up of women. With reference to the national reconciliation process, which would lead to a general election and the formation of a national unity government, she would be grateful to know the extent to which the State of Palestine was committed, firstly, to ensuring a minimum level of participation by women in the elections and, secondly, to the Palestinian legislative body attaining a composition of at least 30 per cent women. She asked whether the Government was taking concrete measures to increase the level of women participating in the security sector, which was reported as very low, and whether Palestinian political parties had responded to the appeal to include women and female leaders in their delegations. Noting that very few women represented the State of Palestine internationally, either as diplomats or on international bodies, she wished to have information on measures that the Government had taken or would take to ensure equal access of women to posts at international level.

58. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that nothing prevented women from participating in political life in the State of Palestine. A number of laws had been enacted to reinforce women's participation and to prevent discrimination in employment. Reaching a leadership position in governmental bodies, for both women and men, depended on the number of years of service completed. While there were only eight Palestinian women ambassadors, each held a key post. For example, the Ambassador representing the State of Palestine in The Hague and before the International Court of Justice was a woman. At the permanent missions both in Geneva and in New York, the staff was more than 50 per cent women; the European Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Protocol Unit were both under women directors; the total proportion of women in the diplomatic corps below ambassadorial level was more than 50 per cent. That meant that, in a few years, when they had accumulated the years of service, many women would be promoted to the post of ambassador.

59. **Ms. Elhaq** (State of Palestine) said that nothing prevented the participation of women in the legislature and in the drafting and elaboration of laws, including the Basic Law. The 30 per cent quota applied and all measures must be taken to implement it. The Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy included increasing women's participation in political life. The Ministry for Women's Affairs was working to produce a strategy to bring the legislation into line with international standards so as to increase women's participation, to raise awareness of gender equality, to increase cooperation at all levels between international institutions and women's institutions in the State of Palestine, to improve information technology and to encourage women's involvement in student unions in universities. The share of women in PLO stood at 46 per cent.

60. **Ms. Wahdan** (State of Palestine) said that the government strategy was to increase the number of women working in the security forces. For that purpose, the Government was seeking to enlist 750 women for the 2017–2020 period, who would constitute a majority of new recruits.

61. **Ms. Acosta Vargas** said that the Committee would be grateful for details of measures taken to give women better access to positions of authority and to encourage women to identify with roles of authority, not only in the police or security forces, but high profile positions in the legal profession.

62. **Ms. Manalo** wished to know whether Palestinians were represented on the diplomatic staff within the United Nations system and, if so, what the proportion was of Palestinian men to women.

63. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that he understood that jobs in the United Nations system were mostly available to States Members of the Organization. The State of Palestine was exploring the possibility of seeking representation on one or more of the human rights treaty bodies, but so far had not obtained such representation.

64. **Ms. Alaga** (State of Palestine) said that the national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security stipulated the principle of equality between women and men and the importance of women obtaining posts at decision-making levels. While 61 per cent of university students were women, in public office, the percentage of men was greater and, at the higher level, only 11.4 per cent were women. The State of Palestine acknowledged the difficulties in achieving its objective, though progress was visible. Women had proved their potential in employment but traditional stereotypical images of women persisted when it came to recruitment. The Government was therefore engaging with the media to change attitudes.

65. **Ms. Salhieh** (State of Palestine) said that 3 higher court judges, 5 court of appeal judges, 10 court of the first instance judges, and 11 magistrates' court judges were women, totalling 37. The first woman judge had been appointed in 1988 and currently sat on the country's supreme court. In the Office of the Public Prosecutor, out of a staff of 162 persons, 33 were women, including 5 senior-level prosecutors. The law set out criteria for the appointment of judges and did not discriminate between women and men. If those criteria were respected, and subject to the necessary competition prior to appointment, measures could be put in place to achieve 50 per cent representation of women judges.

66. **Ms. Abusaa** (State of Palestine) said that innovative solutions should be sought to increase the numbers of women in the sharia courts. It was only since 2009 that women had been employed in those courts, and there were only four women judges administering sharia law. As a result of their recent entry into the sharia courts, women's promotion to higher posts would be delayed.

67. **Ms. Gabr** said that the Committee would appreciate receiving statistics on women's participation in the judiciary in percentage form rather than in numbers employed. Regarding the 30 per cent quota that had been adopted, she wished to know if it would be implemented at the municipal level.

Article 9

68. **Ms. Nadaraia** said that the Committee would appreciate information on the restrictions on the right to nationality arising from the occupation and whether it prevented the relevant State agency from fulfilling its role in conferring Palestinian nationality and residency in accordance with the law. Though the law was clear on the rights of Palestinian women to grant Palestinian nationality and residency status on their children at birth, their ability to do so was reported to be restricted. She asked whether the delegation could elaborate on those problems and also on the problem of stateless women.

69. **Mr. Awad Ala** (State of Palestine) said that, under Palestinian law, Palestinian women passed on their nationality to their children regardless of the nationality of the husband, and the same applied to a Palestinian husband with a foreign wife. There were no internal barriers to passing on Palestinian nationality. However, the State of Palestine had no control over its territory because of the Israeli occupation. The Palestinian registry was unable to register a birth and give Palestinian nationality to a child without obtaining prior approval from the Israeli authorities. If the approval was not granted, it was impossible to issue an identity card for the child. The Government was considering elaborating a law on nationality and incorporating relevant provisions in the new constitution but the practical difficulties would remain as long as the Israelis retained control of the Palestinian registry.

70. **Ms. Haidar** said she would be grateful for information on what happened in the event of the demolition of the house of a person without documentation. She wished to know where those persons went as a first step, and what possibilities were available to them

to obtain registration through the Palestinian registry. The question of obtaining nationality was fundamental to enjoyment of all other rights, and the Committee would welcome further information in that regard, including as to whether the question was covered under the national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.